ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An automated analysis method and tool for a digitally imaged financial item can digitally recognize a plurality of characters across an area of a digital image containing character indicia at predetermined positions in the area and also possibly containing non-character indicia in the area. This finds exemplification in an automated check processing method and check sorting system in which a check's MICR line that has been read and interpreted as invalid can be digitally analyzed, via a digital image of the check, to identify MICR characters that could not be validly read or interpreted by the conventional MICR processing equipment. This includes digitally applying character recognition processing to an invalidated MICR line in a digital image of the financial item (e.g., a check). Previously invalidated MICR line data can then be corrected.